

Proclamation

There are an estimated 35,000 humpback whales in the world. Hawai‘i is the only state in the country where as many as 10,000 humpback whales return every winter to mate, calve and nurse their young.

Whales are air breathing mammals which at full size may be more than 45 feet in length and can weigh nearly 45 tons. As Hawai‘i’s official state marine mammal, whales are known as *koholā* in Hawaiian, and are considered a representation of the Native Hawaiian god of the ocean, Kanaloa. They are recognized as important figures in Native Hawaiian cultural practices and traditions, including using the ivory of whale teeth to create highly prized niho palaoa, which was worn by high-ranking ali‘i. The rare beauty of the niho palaoa was said to bring spiritual power to the carver, the pendant itself and the person who wore the pendant.

Humpback whale watching generates more than \$30 million in visitor industry revenues annually. People from our state, the mainland and around the world have been entertained, educated and awed by the majesty, spectacular acrobatics and behavior of this charismatic animal. Researchers continue to study the humpbacks’ most unique characteristic, the whale song. Covering a range of eight octaves, their highly structured songs have been found to use repeated themes and even rhyme. Using their songs for navigation and communication as they travel across thousands of miles of ocean, whale song is part of their social system and community. In addition to serving as a way to navigate and attract mates, researchers believe singing establishes the hierarchy among male humpbacks.

As the home of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, which is co-managed as a federal-state partnership, our state has the only marine protected area in the nation solely devoted to humpback whale protection and conservation of their habitat.

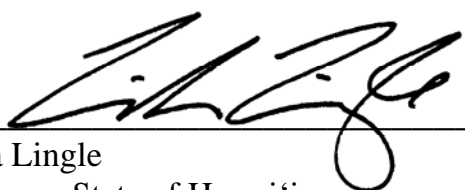
With the month of February being the peak of Hawai‘i’s humpback whale season, the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association and the state Department of Land and Natural Resources are celebrating *Humpback Whale Awareness Month* with several whale watches and whale behavior awareness and population counts, as well as awareness activities and lectures statewide.

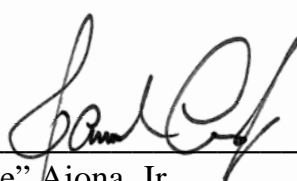
THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and **I, JAMES R. “DUKE” AIONA, JR.**, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai‘i, do hereby proclaim **February 2008**, as

HUMPBACK WHALE AWARENESS MONTH

in Hawai‘i, and encourage our citizens to commit to the protection of Hawai‘i’s spectacular humpback whales for future generations.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai‘i, this first day of February 2008.


Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai‘i


James R. “Duke” Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai‘i